

**ROTARY DISTRICT 9800
YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM COMMITTEE INC.**

RISK MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

In Rotary International District 9800 the Rotary International Youth Exchange Program provides young people with the opportunity to experience in short term and long term exchanges the cultures, problems and accomplishments of people in other countries. To ensure the long-term success of this Program, the District 9800 Youth Exchange Program (YEP) Committee is committed to the protection of participants from harm, including exploitation and abuse.

The Program participants include students (short term and long term), host family members, Rotarians, Rotary Club student Counselors, sponsoring and hosting Rotary Club members and the members of the District 9800 YEP Committee and their partners.

This statement sets out to detail the District 9800 YEP Committee's pro-active approach in dealing with aspects to reduce risk of harm to the participants.

While a risk management program cannot guarantee elimination of all risk, the following outline attempts to:

- _ Systematically identify and evaluate the exposures to loss in the Program.
- _ Identify actions that will prevent or mitigate the possibility of loss.
- _ Outline the implementation of procedures to address these possibilities of loss.
- _ Periodically monitor the results, and where necessary, revise to ensure the Program remains relevant to the changing dynamics of the society.
- _ Review the Program as a regular agenda item questioning its operation, improvement and analysis of feedback from the participants.

OUTBOUND EXCHANGE STUDENTS FROM DISTRICT 9800

1. Promotion of the Program- this involve:

- a. Information meetings.
- b. Advertisements in schools.
- c. Information from the District YEP Committee to Rotary Clubs.
- d. Information from Rotary International.
- e. Use of available media.

2. Student Selection- this involves:

- a. Rotary Club interview processes.
- b. The District 9800 YEP Committee interview processes.

3. Preparation of Outbound students- this involves:

- a. Briefing weekends (the nature varies for short term and long term exchanges).
- b. The Group of previous year returned youth exchange students.
- c. The current inbound youth exchange students being hosted by District 9800 Clubs.
- d. The members of the District 9800 YEP Committee, partners and invited speakers.

4. Overseas Districts with which we exchange- this involves:

- a. Exchange arrangements with overseas Districts that conduct their Youth Exchange Program in accordance with Rotary International guidelines.
- b. Developing established lines of communication between District Youth Exchange Committees.
- c. Developing new exchanges in accordance with Rotary International guidelines.
- d. Systematic processing of youth exchange documentation prior to the exchange to determine suitability and placement of students.

5. Insurance-

The District 9800 YEP Committee ensures that all students in the Program are covered for personal injury and property damage from when they leave home for their exchange to when they return home after their exchange, in accordance with Rotary International guidelines.

6. Travel to overseas destinations- this involves:

- a. Students are accompanied to the departure airport by parents and friends.

- c. The meeting of the students by the host Clubs/ Districts is made at the nominated arrival airport according to the arrangements made prior to the departure of the students.
- d. The students are instructed to notify their natural family on arrival.

7. Difficulties that may arise during the exchange

To minimise difficulties that may arise, the members of the District 9800 YEP Committee are in contact with the students regularly. The following procedures are in place.

- a. Students are required to send to the District 9800 YEP Committee a monthly report.
- b. The maintenance of contact with the parents of the exchange students.
- c. Regular contact with Youth Exchange Program counterparts in overseas Districts.
- d. Contact with sponsoring Clubs in District 9800, mainly through the Club Counselor.

8. Return trip to Australia

All District 9800 YEP students are contracted in the exchange Program to return to Australia by the most direct method.

9. Reintegration into the Australian Community

- a. The District 9800 YEP Committee acknowledges the difficulties that the exchange students have in reintegration into their family, with their friends and their future career and life.
- b. A debriefing program is conducted to enable returned exchange students and their families to discuss all aspects of the Youth Exchange Program and processes to facilitate reintegration and focus on future life.

INBOUND EXCHANGE STUDENTS TO DISTRICT 9800

10. Suitability of Inbound Overseas Exchange Students

- a. It is recognised that the District 9800 YEP Committee does not have the control over the selection of exchange students from overseas Districts.
- b. The District 9800 YEP Committee can choose the Districts with which youth exchanges are organised.
- c. If there are a number of unsuitable students from any particular District over a period of time the District 9800 YEP Committee would choose to suspend exchanges with that District.
- d. Documentation received from overseas Districts provides information about the potential exchange students, the family situations, health, education standards, career prospects and recreational pursuits.

11. Student Placement in a District Rotary Club

- a. Host Clubs are notified at the earliest possible date of their proposed host exchange student.
- b. Host Clubs are encouraged to write to the inbound students to establish communication prior to arrival.
- c. The students are notified of their host Rotary Club.
- d. The sponsoring Rotary District is notified of the hosting and the exchange procedures and processes.
- e. The students and families are required to complete an Inbound Student Agreement before the exchange will be finalised in District 9800.

12. Information for Rotary Clubs in the Youth Exchange Program.

- a. To assist Rotary Clubs, the District 9800 YEP Committee publishes and distributes the following documents:
 - ∑ *A Rotarian's Guide To Sponsoring a Youth Exchange Student.*
 - ∑ *A User Friendly Guide for the Inbound Student Counselor.*
 - ∑ *A Host Family Guide to Rotary Youth Exchange.*
 - ∑ *Host Club Guide to Youth Exchange in District 9800 Australia.*
 - ∑ *Commendation and Criticism of Exchange Students.*
 - ∑ *Inbound and Outbound Student Agreements.*
- b. Host Rotary Clubs are required to appoint a student Counselor for the duration of the exchange
- c. Seminars are conducted to prepare Rotarians, Club Counselors and host families for the exchange.

13. Preparation of Host Families.

Guide To Rotary Youth Exchange”.

- b. It is the host Club’s responsibility to ensure that each prospective family is counseled in relation to the issues that arise in the above- mentioned publication.
- c. Host Clubs are also asked to invite prospective host families to the preparation seminar mentioned in Item 12 above.

14. After the Overseas Students Arrive

- a. Briefing meetings are conducted to identify the standards that the students are expected to maintain during their exchange in District 9800 and to involve them in the activities of the District 9800 YEP Committee.
- b. There is an ongoing encouragement from the District 9800 YEP Committee to the participating host Clubs to adhere to the established youth exchange program guidelines, guarantees and agreements.

15. If The Student Is Not Settling In Or Is Home-sick- this involves:

- a. Liaisons with the host Club Counselor and the District Youth Exchange Officer responsible for the student's country.
- b. Liaisons with the host District and sponsor District Chairpersons.
- c. Where appropriate, arrangements are made for students to be counseled to assist in overcoming difficulties currently being experienced.

16. If Students Wish To Travel- the following procedures are required:

- a. All proposed travel by exchange students in District 9800 must be approved by the host parents and the host Club Counselor prior to travel.
- b. Overnight travel or travel requiring one night or more away from the host home will require the approval of the host parents and the Club Counselor prior to travel.
- c. In addition to the above approvals, Interstate or Overseas travel requires the written approval of the applicant/student’s natural parent(s) or guardian(s) **AND** the verbal approval of the Chairman of the District 9800 YEP Committee or nominee.

17. Alcohol

- a. Students under the age of 18 must not drink alcoholic beverages in public places or on licensed premises.
- b. Students 18 years or older should not drink alcoholic beverages in a public place.
- c. Students under any circumstances must not drink alcoholic beverages to excess.
- d. Should problems arise, host families are advised to consult with the host Club Counselor.

18. Drugs

- a. Students must not use, possess, cultivate or manufacture any illegal drugs or prohibited or restricted substances.
- b. Students must not use cultivated, manufactured or any legal drugs or prohibited or restricted substances unless prescribed by a Registered Medical Practitioner.
- c. If there is any suspicion of a breach of these terms, host families should immediately report this to the host Club Counselor.

19. Driving.

Students are not permitted to drive a motorised vehicle or vessel of any kind during the exchange.

20. Promiscuity/Romance

- a. Students should avoid romantic attachments.
- b. If it is considered that any student is promiscuous or developing romantic attachments, the matter must be discussed with the appropriate student and the host Club Counselor.

21. Schooling

It is a requirement of the Australian Overseas Student Visa that youth exchange students attend a secondary school on each day of operation unless engaged in an approved activity.

22. Financial Matters

- a. Host families are encouraged to help students with their budget.
- b. The host Rotary Clubs provide the youth exchange students with a monthly allowance according to the Rotary International guidelines.
- c. Students are required to have their own funds including a separate emergency fund. The emergency fund is established with the host Club Counselor as the co-signature.

23. Security

For the duration of the exchange period, the host Club Counselor will collect from the youth exchange student in that Club the student's passport, return air ticket and any other travel documents and secure them in a safe place known to the student and the host Club President.

24. Protection of Students in the Case of Complaints of Physical or Sexual Harassment- this involves:

- a. Student protection as covered under guidelines of the Victorian Commission For Children and Young People.
- b. Student protection as advised by the Child Protection Unit, Victoria Police.
- c. Rotary District 9800 Youth Exchange Program Committee Inc. members are required to sign a Prohibited Employment Declaration. The originals are lodged with the Secretary.
- d. Generally, in the event an incident or complaint, the welfare and safety of the young person is the initial priority. The matter must be reported to the Rotary District 9800 Youth Exchange Chairman, the District 9800 Governor, and the District 9800 Legal Advisor. The contact details of these officers are listed in the District 9800 Year Directory, Leadership Directory and Directory of Club Members. The Legal Officer, the District 9800 Governor or the District 9800 Youth Exchange Program Chairman will notify and seek direction from the appropriate Authority in accordance with the requirements of the above guidelines.
- e. Rotary District 9800 YEP Committee Inc. is advised by District 9800 Legal Advisers in matters of procedure in reported matters. It is recognised that procedures may vary according to the circumstances / reporting of the incident or complaint.
- f. A record of the proceedings initiated shall be recorded in the minutes of the District 9800 YEP Committee at the earliest opportunity.

25. International Tensions

The District 9800 YEP Committee is aware that from time to time international situations may occur that may cause concern to parents, students and Rotarians. Members of the District 9800 YEP Committee monitor, from time to time, the official web site of the Commonwealth of Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade seeking information on international situations. If the student and parents formally indicate concern about an overseas country involved with an exchange, the District 9800 YEP Committee Chairman and the Youth Exchange Officer for that country will liaise with the parents to gather information from that web site and from the overseas District Chairperson in order to reach an appropriate outcome.